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THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY

THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY is a training monastery and retreat centre following the Soto Zen Buddhist tradition. The Priory is affiliated with Shasta Abbey whose Spiritual Director and Abbess is Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C. Shasta Abbey is the headquarters of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives of the Soto Zen Church located in Mount Shasta, California. The monks of Throssel Hole Priory are members of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives and follow the teaching and example of Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett.

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THE JOURNAL OF THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY is published as a service to all those who are seriously interested in the practice of Buddhism. Through the Journal, members and friends of the Priory are able to share their experience and understanding of Zen training. Opinions expressed in each article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Abbot, the Editor, or Throssel Hole Priory. The Journal is published quarterly and costs £5.25 p.a.

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The Use of the Will

Rev. Daishin Morgan, M.O.B.C.¹

There is a recurrent theme that crops up in *sanzen*² concerning difficulties in training. People will say "I have difficulty with...." After talking with them for a while about this difficulty, they move on to another subject and begin, "Well, I also have difficulty with...." Sometimes there is no end to the number of things a person "has difficulty with." I am not complaining about the fact people wish to talk about what troubles them, but I am pointing to the need to keep a watch on the overall way in which the "difficulties" are approached as this approach is usually closer to the heart of the problem than the particular difficulty complained of.

A good example of this is when someone who has been meditating for a while comes and says, "I have a lot of difficulty with wandering thoughts." This is a common enough problem and there is nothing wrong in asking about it. However, it is the response to the reply that I am concerned with. The reply is that you have to disengage yourself from the thoughts, let them go, and come back to sitting still. The person then responds by saying how hard they find it to do this, and I reply I never said it was easy! We may then go on to talk about a problem of resentment and I point out how anger is continued by running over and over in our minds how justified we are to be angry, what we will do about it, how dare the guilty party do what they did...and on, and on I point out that this cycle of thought is not necessary one can let it go and be still within the anger that arises. The same is true if the problem happens to be fear, despair, greed, or anything else. A key factor in training is the need to be still in the midst of suffering.

A lot of people respond to this teaching by continuing to say how difficult it is, thereby demonstrating they do not believe they really can let go of the troublesome thoughts. The reason for pointing this out is that it can be helpful to become aware of an habitually negative approach to the Teaching. This negativity arises from a disbelief in one's Buddha Nature. Because there is doubt, the person does not really believe they can let go of the thoughts, or be still within the danger. The only solution is to cut through all the doubt and actually let go of the thought processes and be still. To do this is an act of faith and an act that requires the individual to use his will. Quite often *Samzen* is sought as a substitute for using one's own will in the hope that there may be some other solution. Well, I can tell you there is no substitute. Sooner or later you have to get fed up enough with the way things are and do something about it.

Within meditation, people are often afraid to use the will. They wrongly assume that using the will reinforces the self and so they shy away from it. Those who meditate can also be afraid of karmic consequence. They understand that every act has a corresponding reaction and think that any mistake they make will be exacerbated by a deliberate use of the will, apparently believing that the consequences of being indecisive and flaccid are preferable.

The use of the will is also inhibited by the fear of repression. We have all been brought up on the horrors of what happens when emotions are repressed and, without adequately investigating what this means, we apply the theory to areas it was never intended for. You will not repress something which you are aware of and wish to do something about. Repression is the opposite of meditation. It is to deny what goes on in the heart and mind. In meditation, whatever arises is accepted and acknowledged, but it does not end there. The problem will continue as long as we keep providing the conditions which enable it to grow. We have to choose to stop it, and to do this we have to exercise the will. If you are serious

about wanting to meditate, the effect will be to gradually allow anything that has been repressed to come to the surface. Once it does, you then have to choose what to do about it; either to indulge in it or to let it go, and there is no letting go without the use of the will.

What people often do, however, is to put their energy into complaining about how hard it is without realising that this is to actively use the will to go in the wrong direction. Be aware of the complaints that go on in your head and let them go as well! When there are no longer any excuses you confront the bare facts of the matter and can see what you are doing.

Offering spiritual counselling can often be like trying to tame a wild and frightened animal—it keeps trying to bolt down the nearest hole. You block the hole by pointing out it is no real refuge and so the person then bolts for another hole. It is a great day when someone comes for advice and is not looking for a bolt-hole, but is willing to stand still in the open and face whatever comes.

To exercise the will, when done correctly, is the manifestation of the Mind that seeks the Way, the will to enlightenment. The will is not something right or wrong. Its misuse will certainly lead to suffering, but if we fear its misuse we end up choosing to be indecisive, and thereby end up misusing the will by default! If you are afraid to create karma you will never get very far in your training. Understand that karma itself is teaching; if you try to do what is right, but get it wrong, then the consequences will show you what went wrong.

To use the will correctly it must be used within the context of the Precepts. If your intention is to *cease from evil, do only good, and do good for others*, then although your use of the will may at times be misguided, it will never be evil. The truth is there is no escape, no bolt-hole in which we can hide from the fact that we

are responsible for whatever we choose to do, whether that choice is made by default, out of fear, or with one's head in a fog. To ignore this is the root cause of suffering. It is therefore better to act with a sincere heart, and possibly make a mistake, than to do nothing in the delusion that one will thereby avoid unpleasant consequences. We are here in this life to learn, and learning can be painful. Accept that pain, for you will not avoid it, and then being in this world becomes a means to enlightenment.

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Notes

1. Except when addressing an Abbot or Abbess, the title 'Rev. Master' (and 'Rev. Teacher') is no longer in use. The letters M.O.B.C. after a priest's name indicates he or she is a Zen Master within the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives.
2. *Sanzen*: Spiritual counselling with a Zen Master.

* * *

The Festival of Feeding the Hungry Ghosts

Rev. Mokugen Kublicki, M.O.B.C.

Each year in the autumn, usually on or near the time of the equinox, a *Searching of the Heart* retreat [J. Sesshin] is held at the monastery. This week-long retreat culminates in the Ceremony of the Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts [J. Segaki]. This is an opportunity to offer the merit of our training to those in need, and in particular to those who have died. That same evening, a ceremonial burning of the paper and wooden memorial tablets which were on the altar during the morning's ceremony takes place. The purpose of this ceremony is to express that all things are, in their fundamental nature, pure and unstained; that delusion cannot destroy the Eternal; and that all things are always within its compassionate embrace. This is known as the immaculacy of emptiness:

.....The Light of the Lord of the House, the heart-mind, irradiates the infinity of space
----within its centre I may not say that it is empty; I may not say that it is not empty. It is unstained, immaculate; I am not it, It is all of me; thus form is void and void is form.'

The equinox is a time of the transition of the seasons, when the impermanence and flux of nature is clearly visible. In Buddhism, everything can be used to point to the Truth, and this time of year has traditionally been used to help point to the necessity of redoubling one's efforts in training, for turning from the worldly to the spiritual, to the 'crossing to the other shore.' The 'other shore' is the place that is beyond the opposites, beyond greed, hate, and delusion. It is our true heart, the Buddha Nature within each of us. At this time (as indeed at all times), we are given the opportunity to deepen our meditation, to let go of that which holds us back from opening our hearts completely, and to see

that the fetters which seem to bind us are of our own making.

Through training, we can dissolve the seeming obstacles just as clouds can be dispersed in a clear sky. We can accept the full responsibility and consequences of our actions, and we can choose to live from the heart of our Buddha Nature at all times. In this way, we can give of ourselves freely and thereby offer the merit of our training for the benefit of all sentient beings. During this Festival retreat, we particularly remember in our meditation all those who have died, and any being in need of spiritual help.

A hungry ghost [*S. Preta*, *J. Gaki*] is any being, or aspect of ourselves, which feels the lack of unity with the Eternal. In Buddhist iconography, a hungry ghost is usually depicted as a being with an emaciated body, swollen belly, constricted throat, and tiny mouth. Because of grasping and clinging, and seeking for refuge and comfort in all the wrong places, there is a hunger and a thirst that cannot be satisfied. Whatever is snatched causes even more pain. Sometimes we can recognise aspects of the hungry ghost within ourselves. By not being still, and not listening to the still, small Voice within our heart, we doubt that we are already complete just as we are---with nothing to be fearful of, and no necessity to grasp at anything. Through the process of meditation, through being open to that which is within us, however seemingly fearful or difficult, we are given the opportunity to see and cleanse these unresolved and unpeaceful aspects of ourselves. Through a sincere *Sange*² and the willingness to look up, the willingness to let go of our attachments, we come to know and taste the real food of the Dharma: the true glory of the Eternal.

In the iconographic depiction of the six worlds (the heaven, human, animal, asura, hungry ghost, and hell realms), a Buddha is clearly shown in each realm signifying freedom from suffering, if we but choose to look up and let go of delusion. No matter what state we may

be in, if we are willing we are always able to find the Truth. In the realm of the hungry ghosts, the compassionate Buddha appears holding a bowl of rich treasure, spiritual food and drink of the Dharma which the beings in this realm can safely consume; the nectar of the Dharma that quenches the flames of craving and delusion.

The Ceremony of Feeding the Hungry Ghosts is a beautiful expression of the willing offering of training. An altar is prepared and laden with a delicious variety of food and drink so that all may find something of nourishment. The many aspects of the altar and ceremonial are so arranged that the dead, the hungry ghosts, and all beings in need of spiritual help can be reassured of their immaculacy.

.... We pray that all will partake of this offering and, discarding their evil, realise the true mind.

We pray that all beings will take refuge in the Three Treasures and share in the merit that fills the universe....³

In the evening, the ceremonial burning of the small memorial tombstones of the dead takes place. The ceremonial fire may be built in the shape of a Bodhisattva crown---the willingness to train endlessly for both self and others.

However innumerable beings may be, I vow to save them all.

However innumerable the passions are, I vow to convert them all.

However limitless the Dharma, I vow to understand it completely.

However infinite the Buddha's Truth, I vow to attain it.⁴

Again, this is the opportunity to give up everything, because it is the true nature of our heart to do so; the opportunity to let go of everything which holds us back, everything to which we cling, our pride, our doubt, our

anger.

We can let go of our selfish opinions, and we can let go of our dead relatives and friends. We let go of judgementalism and see that all beings are one within the Eternal. To let go is not to abandon and revile for in Buddhism nothing is discarded as useless; it is to let back into our hearts that which we may have pushed away. In the act of opening the door of our heart, in the act of acceptance and the letting go of resistance, we are naturally precipitated into the realm of the Buddhas and Ancestors. The burning of the flame is the flame of true training that reaches to the Eternal. It is the sincere heart that says, "I am willing." The joyous blazing of the rising of the spirit that longs to dissolve within the Eternal. The Immaculacy of Emptiness is to be empty of self. Nothing is lacking and nothing is in excess. In one of his sermons the Buddha states: *It is true, Simba, that I preach extinction, but only the extinction of pride, lust, evil thought, and ignorance, not that of forgiveness, love, charity, and truth.*

Our business in training is to allow this call, this upward movement of our heart to the Eternal to take place. To be willing to take the next step wholeheartedly is all that is required. If we sincerely meditate, if we sincerely listen to and follow the still, small Voice within, we will be lifted as surely as the flames of the fire reach for the sky. The self is dissolved in the very burning up of the heart with love, wisdom, and compassion.

If you want to become one with the Truth, as one fire combines with another fire, throw away selfish opinions, old emotions, arrogance, and obstinacy and learn the True Mind of the Lord with the naive mind of a child....⁵

Notes

1. Rev. Roshi Jiyu-Kennett, *How to Grow a Lotus Blossom*

- (Mount Shasta, CA: Shasta Abbey Press, 1977), p. 182.
2. An act of contrition and repentance. The sincere recognition and acceptance of one's past mistakes. *Sange* is the true source of religious humility and a principal gateway to enlightenment.
 3. From *The Sweet Gate Scripture*.
 4. The Four Bodhisattva Vows.
 5. Rev. Roshi Jiyu-Kennett, *Zen is Eternal Life* (Emeryville, CA: Dharma Publishing, 1976), p. 209.

* * *

...Snow on the silver plate; the heron hiding in the bright moon. When Nagyaarajyuna and Kanadaiba meet for the first time Nagyaarajyuna places a bowl full of water in front of Kanadaiba; looking at the water you see the bottom of the bowl: there is no top, bottom or sides to the water--the ego or self is as this. The full bowl is free from defilement, the water clear and pure; the needle is put in the water and penetrates both top and bottom---here there is no right or wrong. Master and disciple are inseparable; upon comparing there is nothing which is not pure, there is no stain: when mixed together, blended, there is no trace....

....It is as a miraculous lance which passes through the heart. Water flowing excavates a hole in a mountain, soaking heaven; the needle can pierce even the smallest mustard seed. Water cannot be torn by anything and leaves no trace; the needle, too, is hard as a diamond. When talking about the needle and the water, nothing is meant but your body and mind; when all the water is consumed there is only the needle: when spat out again there is clear water. Thus the Way of master and disciple are the same and there is no self or other....

Great Master Keizan, Denkoroku: Chapter 16.

Am I doing Enough?

John Eastwood

....Such action and
Most unpretentious work all foolish seem
And dull, but those who practise thus this law
Continually shall, in all worlds, be
Called Lord of Lords unto eternity.

*The Most Excellent Mirror-----Samadhi.*¹

Over the last few years, Buddhist training has given my life a foundation, a sense of direction, which it had previously lacked. However, I have frequently been plagued by the question: Am I doing enough for a suffering world by just sitting in meditation and working on myself?

There is an element of karma from the past in my asking this question. I am now a lay Buddhist, having taken lay ordination at the last *Keeping of the Ten Precepts* retreat [*J. Jukai sesshin*]. But until a few years ago, I was very active politically as a Communist and a Trade Union activist. I believed that a better world could be created through political change. Like many others before me, I became disillusioned with Communism. Revolution seemed to offer nothing better than did the status quo. Although I worked with many people in the political arena whose genuine concern for others cannot be doubted, there will always be problems arising out of changes in power structures. The wise use of power is not necessarily guaranteed when revolutionary changes take place. After my break with politics, I re-read a lot of the basic Buddhism I had read when I was younger, and went on to develop a regular meditation practice as a result of my experiences.

The question of 'doing something' still frequently reappeared. As a political activist, I was used to doing

things-----organising strike action, speaking at mass meetings and at party public meetings. There was a great emphasis on fighting your own corner (sometimes physically!) By contrast, sitting in meditation seemed like a cop-out no matter how much sense the Buddha's Teaching seemed to make. The karma from the past exerted a strong influence. Taking my faith in both hands, I persisted with the meditation practice. It didn't make sense at that time to do anything else. The effort of basing my life on the Precepts and daily meditation brought about gradual, almost imperceptible changes. 'My' views, 'my' opinions, shrank in importance. I came to see that doing something, in the sense of acting on the external world, is very often rooted in the ego---'This is what you should do,' 'I know best...' I came to see that such attitudes, far from being constructive, were actually a kind of arrogant interference.

The understanding slowly dawned that the world is as it is because of the prevalence of greed, hate, and delusion: Man's feeling of separation from the Eternal in himself. Mistaking their egos and opinions for true reality, people act in ways which are sure to increase the burden of suffering in the world. If such attitudes produce the world's wrongs, matters will not improve if we employ more of the same approach-----regardless of how pure people believe their motives to be.

Buddhist training has taught me that political changes which leave delusive attitudes untouched will change nothing. Only a change in people's hearts will end suffering as they see the unreal nature of the ego and start to live from the Buddha Nature. The eradication of greed, hate, and delusion will only happen when people see the need to do something about themselves. This is a process which cannot be forced on anybody:

...You will pay for everything you do if you do if you not cut the roots *now* and live by fully-digested Preceptual Truth. Do not worry about the karma of others; each man his karma makes.²

I have come to see that working on yourself is far from being a cop-out. If anything, it seems easier sometimes to throw yourself into all sorts of activities aimed at changing externals, rather than devoting yourself to the more difficult task of looking honestly at yourself and your motives. The life of training has shown me we can only truly help others when our egos are out of the way, when the desire to help comes from the Eternal within us. Only when we act without the wish to manipulate, only when we do something because the still, small Voice of the Buddha Nature tells us that it is right to do so, only then are we fit to help others.

Nowadays, I do not feel irresponsible or indulgent when I do the 'unpretentious work' of meditation. I am doing what is necessary for me to do. I will trust the still, small Voice to tell me when it is right to do any more.

....Some people worry that meditation is a way of hiding from the world, but, on the contrary, through coming to understand one's true relationship with the Eternal Buddha and all beings, you begin to see more clearly where your responsibilities lie. Meditation is not an antisocial activity, quite the reverse; it is the still point of certainty, the source of strength which enables one to act with a compassion and wisdom which are unfettered by fear....³

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Notes

1. *Zen is Eternal Life*, p. 283.
2. Great Master Keizan, *Kyōjūkaimon*, with commentary by Rev. Roshi Jiyu-Kennett (Mount Shasta, CA: Shasta Abbey Press, 1977), p. 6.
3. Rev. Daishin Morgan, 'The Mind of Meditation,' in *Serene Reflection Meditation* (Throssel Hole Priory, 1986), p. 43.

The Place of Sexuality in Training

Rev. Daishin Morgan, M.O.B.C.

Buddhism teaches that the cause of suffering is ignorance which, in turn, gives rise to desire and clinging. The process of training is the discovery of how to transcend desire by overcoming ignorance. By means of meditation we are able, in time, to see what it is which binds us to desire; this insight results in the knowledge of what desire really is. When we recognise its destructive nature, clinging is dissolved and we can be free. Desire is the seeking for refuge in something other than the Buddha and therefore is transient, illusory, and bound to suffering.

When we are prepared to give up everything we can be released from all suffering and know the joy that comes from unity with the Eternal. From this desire we can see with clear eyes how best to fulfil the Bodhisattva vow to save all sentient beings. The degree to which our naturally clear vision is clouded by ignorance is in direct ratio to the degree of clinging to desire.

The place that sexuality has in the scheme of things is that ultimately it must be relinquished, like every other desire. This means that celibacy is the natural outcome of religious training. However, each of us must train where we are now and deal with sexuality like any other desire as it arises, without guilt. That we experience sexual desire is not a problem; what matters is how we deal with it. Have compassion for yourself where you are now, but avoid the mistake of supposing there is nothing beyond your present understanding and use of sexuality. To say that sexuality must eventually be transcended is not to deny it can be the vehicle for expressing much love; nor is it to deny there is a place for marriage and the procreation of children. It is precisely because Soto Zen recognises that marriage can be a true medium of training that it has a ceremony to

witness the sincerity of purpose and purity of such a relationship:

We are now being given the light of the Lord so that we will extinguish the light of selfishness. We will make the Lord's light sanctify our marriage, and we will be converted deeply to the Three Treasures. From now on we will purify our bodies and minds so that we will make no mistake in human morals and so as to help each other to be successful each in our own way. Our every action shall increase our respect for life and the merits of our relationship shall glorify all living things.'

To say that sexuality must eventually be transcended is to point out a direction the road takes; that we may not have reached that point on the road should not cause us to doubt ourselves, become enmeshed in guilt and fear, nor to suppress our sexuality.

The life of renunciation has always been the role model in Buddhism. However, it is clearly stated in the Mahayana scriptures that what matters is to renounce the world; the form one adopts in doing so, whether monastic or lay, is of secondary importance. Renouncing the world means giving up everything in order to be free----free to help others as Kanzeon helps the world, through the deepest compassion and wisdom. The reason renunciation is so important is because to take refuge in outward things rather than taking refuge in the absolute nature of the Buddha is to know only those outer things which are illusory and subject to suffering. One can only know the peace and freedom of the Buddha when one seeks it above everything else. This principle can be observed for oneself in meditation and proved true time after time.

Our society does not make it easy to understand the true place of sexuality. We are conditioned to believe that our worth as human beings depends upon our ability to be sexually aroused or to sexually arouse and satisfy

others. A 'healthy' sex life is usually a synonym for sexual indulgence which is regarded as the norm. Buddhism does not make a song and dance about morality for its own sake, but points out that certain actions cause suffering and are therefore to be avoided. The Precept on sexuality reads: *Do not indulge in sexuality*, leaving us to discover for ourselves what indulgence means. The reason for not indulging in sexuality is that it is a cause of suffering to do so. Marriage and the procreation of children are not regarded as indulgence, but a means through which one can learn a great deal about the path of training; and, in the process, help one's children cleanse their own karma. Nonetheless it is still a raft which must be discarded as one reaches the other shore. This does not mean an instant divorce; it means that, as training goes deeper and the passions are allowed to cool, celibacy becomes quite natural without it having to be forced, and without any need for natural functions to be suppressed. The marriage can then, as both partners come to this understanding, reach a deeper and more profound level of love. We need not fear we will damage ourselves by allowing ourselves to be celibate. The body takes care of itself quite naturally without our having to indulge in sexual activity.

We are, however, unlikely to be able to reach this point unless we consciously do something about lust. Lust is the fantasy surrounding the sex drive, the thoughts we nurture and play with in a mental version of masturbation. We can let go of the fantasy by seeing how it binds us to the fetter of lust. Each time we wake up to the fact that we have fallen into this activity, whether it is lust for sex or for anything else, we can let it go, provided we really want to take refuge in the Eternal and not in sexuality. Should you be in some doubt whether you do want to let it go, then just be aware of what you are doing. Come to see for yourself what the nature of this attachment is. See what the content of the fantasy really is and what fulfilling that fantasy would mean. Understand, for instance, that when you are a slave of your senses you cannot know what love really is. If you only use other people as a means of

satisfying your own desires, then you can never really know them for who they are. This leads to a deep sense of loss and loneliness which many people foolishly try to fill by seeking still further indulgence, without realising they are making things worse. When you begin to see that each time you indulge a lustful thought you are separating yourself from the one thing you truly value, it becomes much easier to let it go----not easy, but easier.

As we work and train with sexuality we are not offending some god who will punish us for being sinful; we are moving towards a deep understanding of the causes and effects of the situation. Our sexuality must be acknowledged and accepted where we are now. Suppression is harmful, but we do not need to be indulgent in order to avoid suppression. There is a middle way wherein sexuality is fully acknowledged and regarded compassionately without the need to indulge in actions which lead to suffering.

With the above as background I would like to move on and point out the problems that can arise within our own Buddhist community where trainees meet together and do not train constructively with their sexuality. We take refuge in each other at meetings and social gatherings as members of the Sangha with the intention of learning how to trust and rely upon each other spiritually. When this happens as it should, a deep harmony is created and the true meaning of friendship is discovered. If we allow ourselves to indulge the sexual feelings that arise, then we destroy what we are trying to create. That sexual feelings arise is not a problem, but they become a problem when we indulge them. This is because we begin to approach other group members as sexual objects in whom we are interested. The relationship is then converted into a sexual one, one with an end in view other than taking refuge in the Eternal. Many of us have experienced what happens when sexuality arises in what had been a friendship. It changes things considerably. For a time you may have a greatly heightened sense of emotional feeling for each other, but that soon passes,

and you find the intimacy you perhaps enjoyed as friends has been lost and cannot easily be captured. The tendency is then to seek another partner and repeat the mistake all over again. If this is happening in a meditation group, then the undercurrents and soap opera that develop might make popular television, but will hardly create a conducive environment for training. One should also consider this from the point of view of someone new to the group who comes with great sincerity but, because of their confusion about where training lies, ends up having a sexual encounter with an established group member. That member is perhaps equally confused, but nevertheless should know better. Being part of a meditation group involves responsibility. When new people come they will look to you for a lead. If the lead you give them is to indulge in sexuality, in the long run you are going to create doubt, confusion, and pain. When the more central figures in a group are involved the effect will be that much more damaging. When we train with others our actions, for good or ill, have effects upon those around us. We have a responsibility whether we want it or not, and we will experience the consequences of our choices whether we like it or not.

There is, I believe, a place for an accepted code of behaviour so that we do not lose what is a very precious thing----the refuge of the Sangha. I don't wish to start preaching Victorian values or recommending repressive conventions. Rather, I want to draw people's attention to the fact that unwise actions lead to suffering; by having certain standards of behaviour we can help each other in our training and, in so doing, create an island of sanity in an otherwise insane world. This precious refuge will be jeopardised if we do not understand the need to place limits upon ourselves where sexuality is concerned. There are, and I hope always will be, members of meditation groups who are single and who may at some point want to find a wife or husband. They will naturally seek a partner amongst those who think as they do, so courtship, as it used to be called, must obviously have a place within a lay society. That courtship should be conducted in a way which reflects how you would like the

relationship to mature. Sexuality will be a strong part of it, but should not be allowed to dominate it above all other considerations. For such a courtship to be part of one's training, it should not include sexual intercourse until the commitment of marriage has taken place. The alternative is that it can all too easily be indistinguishable from the casual affair outlined above. Mistakes can and do get made. When that happens look carefully at the consequences and learn from what has happened. Buddhism does not preach divine retribution, but that each action has its consequences and those follow inexorably whether we believe they will or not. This is not a teaching of guilt and shame, but one of wisdom and compassion which comes through the dispelling of ignorance.

One of the difficulties in writing an article like this is that each individual has to work out their own training with sexuality. What is correct teaching for one person at one time may not be the most compassionate teaching for another. If anything I have written here worries you, please feel free to write with your questions.

Notes

1. *The Shasta Abbey Book of Ceremonies*. This is the text of the marriage contract read together by the bride and groom during the wedding ceremony.

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GUEST DEPARTMENT NEWS

SCHEDULE CHANGES:

We are pleased to announce that the Priory will be open to lay guests this year from December 21-27. We warmly invite trainees to come and stay at the Priory at this time and join us in celebrating the *Festival of the Buddha's Enlightenment* on December 25. The New Year Retreat will now begin on December 28 and finish with the *Festival Memorial for Great Master Seck Kim Seng* on January 3. To allow for these changes, the weekend retreat for December 18-20 has been cancelled and the Priory will be closed to guests from December 1-20.

December 18-20 - Weekend retreat cancelled.

December 1-20 - Priory closed to guests.

December 21-27 - Priory open to lay guests over the holiday period.

December 25 - *Festival of the Buddha's Enlightenment.*

Dec. 28/Jan. 3 - New Year Retreat.

January 3 - *Festival Memorial for Great Master Seck Kim Seng.*

OUTSIDE RETREATS AND TALKS:

October 9-18 - SOUTHERN TEACHING TOUR. Please contact the people listed below for further details:

October 9-10 - Cardiff/Public Talk and a Day retreat.
George & Joyce Norwell: 0222.890034.

October 11 - Birmingham/Day Retreat.
Vajira Bailey: 021.429.4080.

October 14 - Chichester/Meditation Group Evening.
Chris Barker: 0243.551315.

October 15 - Guildford/Public Talk.
Peter Lavin: 0705.754490.

October 16-18 - London/Public Talk & two Day Retreats.
Duncan Sellers: 01.794.3109.

- November 6-7 - Edinburgh/Public Talk and Day Retreat.
Rawdon Goodier: 031.667.5870.
- November 11 - Newcastle/Public Talk.
Dave Hurcombe: 091.265.1404.
- November 12 - Manchester University Buddhist Society/
Public Talk.
Stuart Quine: 061.861.9889.

MEDITATION GROUP NEWS:

GUILDFORD: On the third Sunday of each month, our congregation in the Southeast of England meet for a day of meditation and practice. They meet at Surrey University from 10am to 4pm.

Contact Peter Lavin or Duncan Sellers for more information.

* * *



A brief pause during kitchen clean-up.

It is Enough to be Who You Are

Rev. Myoho Harris, M.O.B.C.

Eternal Truth manifests in endlessly different ways: a person, a longing you cannot put a name to, a blade of grass, a thought, a cat, a painful experience, the paper this is written on, life, death. In form and appearance these differ, in essence they are the same. For a blade of grass is not a piece of greenery which has the life of the Eternal somewhere within it, anymore than a person is flesh and blood with the Truth encased in an area we call the Heart. It is because of this that we and all things are whole and complete as we are, needing nothing, lacking nothing.

We ask ourselves how can it be enough when we feel lonely, confused, or afraid? How can we be at peace with a world in which there is pain and suffering? And the answer is that until we learn to look with the eyes of the Heart we will live in a world of shadows and half-truths, painful self-judgements, fruitless comparisons, and that ever-present Why? Why do I feel like this? Why is this happening to me? These questions (the voices of our own painful memories) call for thirst-quenching answers, not theories or regurgitated words. They call with a thirst that can only be quenched by the flowing of 'lion's milk' (the Water of the Spirit).

When a person comes to the monastery, or to one of our groups, they are first shown how to meditate. For if the lion's milk is to flow and wash away the dust which clouds our vision and prevents us from seeing things as they really are, we must go deeper than the intellectual mind of conditioned responses and rigid opinions. With steady, gentle steps we need to teach ourselves how to live from the Heart, from the sea of faith, love, and trust which is itself 'the peaceful mind of unchanging great wisdom.' There is nothing exclusive about this. No matter who or where you are, you can learn how to do it;

you only need to want to. We have all experienced that intuitive gut feeling which may tell us to be on our guard in a certain situation, or which produces an uncomfortable lump of tension when we have said or done something that was unkind or untrue. I know someone who, for no logical reason, stopped his car to check the contents of a cardboard box in a disused parking lot. It contained five abandoned kittens. Meditation is the awareness of this gut feeling, the still, small Voice within, and Buddhist training is to apply the teaching it gives to all we do throughout the day. There is an innocence and simplicity to Buddhist training that is lost among fancy words and intellectual explanations, for in the practise of seemingly simple things the complex ramifications of our past actions and, along with them, the deeper aspects of the teaching begin to unfold.

So we begin with faith in the still, small Voice of our Heart. We may think we came to Buddhism because we were disillusioned with the world, because we were suffering, or because we wanted to improve the quality of our lives. It may all be true, but this alone does not bring us to the meditation hall. We come because we are called; because we have the faith to respond to the deep longing in our hearts to stand up straight and know that which we truly are.

In the midst of difficulties, of changes, lies that which stands free and unaffected by the winds of change. This is the source of the lion's milk. This is what calls to us and this is what answers. To sit in meditation is to entrust ourselves to that which was, is, and always will be at peace with itself and with the world; to that wherein there are no lost souls, no chosen few, but only completeness-----full, rich, still, and alive. A golden, eternal sea of peace, needing nothing, lacking nothing. Whether monk or layman, man or woman, busy parent or business executive, dead or alive, this is the real you. But your thirst cannot be quenched by other people's words. You must find your own.

We are taught to think in terms of good and bad, of

things we like as being advantageous to us and things we dislike, life's difficulties, as being disadvantageous. Meditation shows us that things are not as black and white as we once thought. No one, no thing is cut off or separate from the Eternal's gentle smile. That smile embraces all things, and all things express that smile. We find there is a pure place within us where our memories, hopes, and fears can unfold and reveal themselves in their entirety without guilt or pride. From this place of pure love we begin to see that which troubles us with new eyes.

Feeling is the reaper of karma (past actions). If we hit our thumb with a hammer, it hurts. The pain is not a punishment or a judgement, but simply the way things are. It reminds us to be more aware of what we are doing, and so does karma. If we are to be helped by this teaching, we need to meditate for to meditate is to be aware. Irrespective of whether we become aware of anger or fear, or contentment and joy, the pureness of the meditation remains the same. There is no judgement and no need to doubt the value or quality of our training. It is a gift to see what lies hidden within our bodies and minds, not a problem; and that which does the seeing was, is, and always will be pure, unstained, and clean.

Give no importance to thoughts of 'Can I?' or 'Can't I?', to succeeding or failing in this matter, for this is the Great Matter and within its all-embracing fullness there is no success and failure as the world understands it. We are just as we are and it is enough. We need never fear, despise, or hate anything which arises in our meditation or in our daily lives. All that exists does so for our own good; there is no such thing as coincidence or bad luck. We know that we would never deliberately hurt another, and vice versa. We know in our hearts that all wrong actions are already forgiven. Indeed, there was never anything which needed to be forgiven because our intent was always pure-----and still the end result may have been a thought or deed which harmed oneself or others. Because of this we must be

willing to look at what we have done (and may still be doing) which perpetuates suffering. These actions come from ignorance, momentary lapses of awareness, and do not stand against the inherent purity of ourselves and all other beings and things. There are no good people or bad people. Universal compassion is constantly giving expression to universal compassion and there are no limits in any direction to what we can do. This is as it should be and there is nothing in this we need fear or regret.

As our practice deepens, we find we cannot recognise anything within another person that we do not have within ourselves. Qualities we admire, but thought lacking, are simply attributes we have yet to know and actualise within our own body and mind. Things that disturb us, or which we dislike in others, are a reflection of things we do not yet have the faith to recognise, bless and set free within ourselves. We see that trying to push something away is itself the act that binds us to it, and to grab at anything is to turn away from the completeness of that which we are. The immovable strength within us begins to unfold; the tenderness of its touch melts our stubborn ways.

We find we can be completely at peace with ourselves and with the world without denying that suffering exists or that our own karma needs converting. Perfection does not demand perfection; this brings a freedom of movement which is breathtaking. We see why the great masters of the past and present warn us against comparing ourselves with others, and then making judgements based on those comparisons. If we think someone's understanding is lower than ours, we become complacent or arrogant. If we think they are way ahead of us, we then run the risk of grasping at what we see and of trying to force ourselves to be like them instantaneously, which results in despair. If we think we are doing well, it is only a matter of time before our opinions swing in the opposite direction. All we need to do is be still and look at what is in front of us right now, for this is the way that is open to all. We don't have to be special people,

tin gods, or superstars. We just need to love this mind and cherish that which we are. If we are sad, we grieve; if amused, we laugh. It is just the Eternal expressing itself in endlessly different ways. And it is enough.

* * *

...We should know that we ourselves are the very persons who have the capacity for understanding the Truth for we have the same body and heart as the ancients; we have the same body and mind as Makakashyo and Ananda. Why are we different from the ancients? Because we do not study the Truth sincerely; we let the body go on, oblivious to the passing of time and do not know the Real Self. In order to let us know this fact Ananda took Makakashyo as his master and then taught Shonawashyu and the Way of the Truth was Transmitted from master to disciple; thus the Truth now is no different from the Truth during the Lord's lifetime. We should not complain that we were not born in the Lord's country and did not meet him (in the historical sense)....

Although there is limitless water
gushing from the high rocks,
washing out the stones and scattering
the clouds,
Watering the snows and crushing the
flowers,
Yet there is an immaculate kesa above
the dirt.

Great Master Keizan, Denkoroku: Chapter 4

There is Always a Choice

Rev. Chushin Passmore, O.B.C.

(The following article is an edited transcript of a talk given at the first Summer Programme, July 1987. Part two will appear in our next issue.)

One thing which remains constant in training (and which most of us, at some time or other, would like to forget) is that in each moment we are given a choice---whether to turn towards the Buddha or to turn away; whether to do our best to follow the Precepts or, out of ignorance or wilfulness, continue to break them. And there is always a choice. The choice may not always be easy or clear-cut, sometimes it may even be difficult to see. It can be affected by our background and conditioning, our physical and mental state, and our experience of training, but nevertheless the choice is there. We always have free will in training whatever happens. It is crucial to remember this when we start talking about the law of karma.

The law of karma is not a malicious, nasty, unpleasant *thing* which always comes in the dead of night to frighten us. It's not a *thing*. It is simply a natural process or law without which life would indeed be meaningless and cruel. If our spiritual and moral actions were not subject to the law of cause and effect there would be no means of escape from samsara, this world of suffering; no means of coming to know the Life of the Eternal for ourselves. By understanding the compassion of the Eternal working through the law of karma, and by following its teaching in daily life, we are drawn ineluctably into enlightenment [*Ineluctable*: 'against which it is useless to struggle']. We tend to use the word 'karma' rather loosely to refer only to so-called 'bad karma' or suffering. But there is much more to it than this, a more positive and helpful side which is often overlooked.

By knowing we have the choice whether to train or not in each moment----whether to concentrate on doing kitchen clean-up or spend the time chatting; whether to get up brightly in the morning to sit or stay in bed because we don't feel like it (or, conversely, whether to stay in bed because we are sick, or to get up and make ourselves worse); whether to act on angry feelings or train ourselves to be still within anger....----we also know we are fully responsible for the direction our lives will take. We are faced with countless choices like these every day of the week, every hour, every lifetime. how we deal with them determines the quality and meaning of our existence. So what we are today is a result of what we have chosen to do in the past. External factors such as our relationships with other people, can affect this, but we cannot blame others for karmic consequences incurred by our own actions. And what we are tomorrow is determined by what we choose to do today. If we accept the truth of this, sincerely and in faith, and start to do something about it (training), then the road before us leads to enlightenment; but if we choose not to accept it, then the road will lead us somewhere else. The simple truth of the law of karma should not drive one into despair. That we have a choice is, on the contrary, a cause for rejoicing. Great Master Dogen cuts through the murk surrounding karma and goes right to the heart of the teaching:

....The principle of causation means those who practise well realise enlightenment----it's as straightforward as that.

and

....The principle of causation is straightforward: Those who do wrong fall into hell; those who do good attain enlightenment. This is the reason the Buddhas and Patriarchs appeared in the world, Bodhidharma came from India, and that sentient beings can see the Buddha and listen to his teaching.'

Countless volumes have been written about the many

categories of karma and the intricacies of its operation, but if we wish to meet the Buddha face to face all we need worry about is 'to do good.' 'To do good' is to practise meditation and follow the teaching of the Precepts. By doing this continuously, we create the right climate or conditions for the Buddha Mind to open. There is no room for doubt about this; if we practise sincerely, opening up our hearts a little more each day, the Buddha Mind is sure to open. The Buddhas and Ancestors, all the Bodhisattvas, and the universe itself, bear witness to this great promise. To understand and act upon this principle is to understand the law of karma. It is also the deeper meaning of the words *to turn the stream of compassion within*. Feeling sorry for oneself is not enough in training for it takes an act of will to turn the stream of compassion within; to get moving, and keep moving, in the right direction.

The law of karma is one of the five *Laws of the Universe*.² It explains a great deal about the world we inhabit, but it does not explain everything. The other laws of the Universe are of equal importance and should be carefully considered:

1. *The physical world is not answerable to my personal will.*

We cannot change the universe to suit our fancies and desires. For various reasons we are born into this world as it is, and complaining about it will not change that. To complain we were born too late or too soon, or are too weak, or nobody understands us does no good. I can say to myself: Tomorrow I'm going to run a mile in four minutes. Quite absurd. (Walking a mile in thirty minutes, with a cup of tea on the way, would be nearer the mark!). We do not have absolute free will in this sense because of the first Law of the Universe. However, I might get up and decide: I would *really* like to run a mile in four minutes so I'm going to leave the monastery and, despite all reason and good sense, train myself to do it. We can choose to be as deluded as we wish.

2. *The Law of Change.*

Everything is in a constant flux, a constant flowing, and we are part of that flow. We exist within the flow of the Eternal. *After all, in the end, what is it that inhales and exhales?* We are not stuck where we are. We can choose to believe we are stuck and behave in ways which reinforce old karmic habits of body, speech, and mind; but it is our choice whether we remain stuck or not. You have been taught how to meditate and find the stillness within, and the importance of the Precepts--- the rest is up to you. The closer we come to the Life of the Eternal, the more deeply we understand and accept the law of change.

[3. *The Law of Karma is inevitable and inexorable.*]

4. *Without fail evil is vanquished and good prevails; this too is inexorable.*

This is a fundamental and necessary truth. If you do not believe it, you can very easily develop a one-sided view of karma which leads eventually to despair. Much of what goes on in the world would appear to refute this law; especially if we hold a deluded and restricted idea of existence: that is, there is a moment of conception, birth, a few years devoted to the pursuit of happiness, and a moment of death when everything is annihilated. What a miserable prospect! If you base your life on this empty premise (but if you are honest with yourself you will be unable to do so without questioning the very point of existence), then human existence is futile. All we see around us is suffering and gross injustice. But having seen the compassionate Buddha working within the law of karma to lead all beings to enlightenment, another prospect opens up before us. When our faith is strong, nothing can prevent us from seeing Buddha unless we choose to give up training.

5. *The intuitive knowledge of Buddha Nature occurs to all men.*

The intuitive knowledge of the Eternal within the heart and mind. When people commit violent and atrocious acts against others it can be very hard to believe in, let alone see, their Buddha Nature. All we see is the

face of the demon; the face of the Buddha is in shadow. But it is wrong to say 'a Buddha' and 'a demon'. There is just 'a Buddha-demon,' a being who, despite its delusion, still longs for love and complete acceptance. Because of unwise choices, some people (the 'monsters' of this world) push themselves to the extremes of cruelty and hate and cause horrendous suffering. But this does not destroy the seed of Buddhahood within; it is simply buried beneath layer upon layer of ignorance, misery, and pain. 'Buddha-monsters' suffer from the delusion that to protect themselves they need to harm or destroy others. But when there is only 'Buddha,' what is there to protect? Who is there to destroy?

To continue with the law of karma: Once an act, or karma, is done (whether good, bad, or neutral) an inevitable and appropriate result follows. It may not come immediately, or next week, or even this lifetime, but it will surely come. If you meditate ten minutes a day for a week and then stop, the karmic consequences of having meditated ten minutes a day for a week is never lost. It will produce good results. You can prove this for yourself from your own experience----you don't need a lot of theories on the subject. Allow what happens in your own life to teach you. Once you accept the law of karma as true and compassionate, the work of the Eternal Buddha can proceed without obstruction; this acceptance opens the gateway to enlightenment.

The word 'karma' simply means 'action.' Actions of body, speech, and mind which either perpetuate suffering or lead to the cessation of suffering. If we use the word too loosely we can unwittingly fall into a kind of fatalism. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between an act (*karma*) and the result, or karmic consequence (*karma vipaka*). A karma produces karma vipaka, but karma vipaka does *not* produce or create karma. If it did, there would be no hope for us. The Third and Fourth Noble Truths [The Cessation of Suffering and the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering] would no longer apply. Individual, volitional acts which we choose to perform creates karma. The important thing is

to make the right choices. For example, the full acceptance of one's karmic inheritance (the result of past actions), with compassion and awareness, is an excellent karma of mind. To go on to convert the inherited tendencies towards evil caused by past mistakes is also excellent karma-----it turns one's life completely around giving it a deep meaning and purpose. And eventually we just train for training's sake and the stream of compassion begins to flow more freely cleansing everything in its path.

If we chain ourselves to the past, then karma becomes a heavy and frightening burden we can carry around with us for as long as we choose. But once we find the Buddha within suffering, pointing us towards an acceptance of our humanity and fallibility, it ceases to be a burden, and the work we need to do proceeds without so much fuss and bother. When this stage in training is reached it's like taking off half-a-dozen wet and soggy overcoats we've been dragging around with us for years; the burden of karma can feel just like this. A mistake is simply a mistake, not a punishment from above, and to compound the problem with guilt is a waste of time. We have to look at our mistakes, closely and honestly, and learn to forgive ourselves and others if we are to find the place beyond forgiveness or resentment, the place of eternal meditation. The forgiveness and compassion may not be immediate for some mistakes leave deep scars, but we have to persevere. Strange as it may seem, you don't have to 'like' someone in a superficial, emotional way in order to recognise their Buddha Nature. You have to look more closely at what is going on; you have to go beyond mere appearances. *Look with the mind of a Buddha and you will see the heart of a Buddha....*

[To be continued]

Notes

1. Great Master Dogen, 'Jinshin Inga' [Deep Belief in Causality], *Shobogenzo*, Vol. 3, p. 98 & 101.
2. *The Book of Life*, Chapter 1, pp. 4-8.

The Value Of Weeds

Pat Ki

....Whilst we adore flowers they wither;
weeds grow strong whilst we long for
their destruction....

This article describes my longing for the destruction of weeds and the lessons they taught me. My garden suffered neglect in 1985 and 1986 while I was away, so this spring I determined not to travel until I had it thoroughly weeded, pruned and sown, and put in good order-----which I did.

I returned after a month and saw a garden full of luxuriant plants; not, however, the vegetables I had planted, but thistles, nettles, bindweed, creeping buttercups, and many other 'enemies.' Despair sent me inside the house. I just couldn't face it. Next I experienced indignation: It wasn't fair! I had dug up every weed, done everything right, so why had they come and where had they come from? Eventually I realised these plants could not be ignored so, numbly and mechanically, I got out my trowel and began weeding the nearest patch. After a few days, I had such a pile of weeds that I ignored my compost heaps and filled dustbins and plastic bags instead. Let them just be thrown away like rubbish and may they never return, I thought.

Thankfully, my seedlings were still there, relieved to see the light again. I watered and tended them carefully and soon everything was all right in the garden once more, much to my relief.

Everything was not all right within me, though. Some old memories stirred inside and, searching for help on my bookshelf, I rediscovered a booklet called *The Value of Weeds*. It contained some fine teaching:

From earliest childhood, most of us have been taught to exterminate, quite ruthlessly, every weed we see in our gardens. Not from a natural hatred of that particular plant, but simply because it is uninvited and 'springing where it is not wanted.' There is usually some reason why weeds appear in a specific place and the observant gardener should be able to recognise these signs. Once you have come to terms with the fact that every garden will always have weeds-----if the soil is at all fertile----and that there is a great deal to be learned from observing them, the problem can be approached in quite a different and, indeed, in a much more positive way.'

This reminded me that weeds also serve a useful purpose: weeds can indicate the deficiency of the soil; they draw out nutrients from the soil which are then best returned by hoeing the weeds and leaving them in the earth or recycling them in the compost; deep-rooted weeds give other benefits too by helping to break up the soil and assisting drainage.

I had forgotten what a wonderful balance of life there was in my garden and had quickly been caught up in the dualistic mind of 'good' and 'bad' and 'wanted' and 'unwanted.' Suddenly I felt a great gratitude and respect for those weeds. They were and are working for good and I have to work with them, observing them, keeping them in check daily, but always returning what they offer to their source, the soil.

I also learned why some weeds 'suddenly' appear. The seeds have lain dormant in the soil (perhaps for years) until conditions in their environment are ripe for them to grow----for example, the soil is disturbed by deep digging.

Everything is a manifestation of the Dharmakaya; the Eternal Buddha, so everything can teach us. Great Master Dogen reminds us of this in the *Shushogi*: *[What is Truly*

Meant by Training and Enlightenment!:

Within these Precepts dwell the Buddhas, enfold-
ing all things within their unparalleled wisdom.
There is no distinction between subject and ob-
ject for any who dwell herein. All things, earth,
trees, wooden posts, bricks, stones, become Bud-
dhas once this refuge is taken....²

The teaching of the value of weeds touched my heart.

'I' am the soil and the gardener. In this soil, there
are unwelcome plants threatening to take over. They are
karmic tendencies and habits, especially greed----greed
for food, friendships, variety; deep-rooted feelings of
inadequacy; fear of competition; impulses to destroy re-
lationships or situations that seem binding.....the list
goes on.

With these weeds I have also experienced hatred, an-
ger, despair, and complacency. Time and time again I've
pulled them up in a once-and-for-all effort to clear the
garden; time and time again they renew themselves from
seeds that have lain dormant from this and earlier ex-
istences. To take a specific weed----gluttony. I first
became conscious of this as a difficulty in my teens and
have attacked it in a number of ways: diets, liquid only
days, fasting days, hypnotherapy, herbalism, and spirit-
ual counselling. Each method has brought me some help
and even eradicated the current crop of greeds, but a
new crop has soon sprung up to replace it.

But I now realise these tendencies and habits are
not bad in themselves. They are saying, in effect: We
are showing you the results of past mistakes so you can
do better now and in the future. Watch us carefully and
learn from us, deal with us in compassion, and do not
despise us.

Daily meditation has made me painfully aware of my
karmic weeds and I believe meditation and my willingness
to keep the Precepts will help keep them under control.

Everything can help, but I know there will never be a day when I can sit back complacently and say: That's it! I've done all I need to do. There is always the *going, going, going on beyond, always becoming Buddha.....* And still there is nothing we lack. A still mind and a loving vigilance are the best tools we have for this work and, after all, this weeding is just day-by-day, minute-by-minute training:

When we wish to teach and enlighten all things by ourselves we are deluded; when all things teach and enlighten us we are enlightened.³

Notes

1. *The Value of Weeds*, Soil Association publication.
2. *Zen is Eternal Life*, p. 158.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

* * *



NEWS

Religious Events: We are pleased to announce that Rev. Myoho Harris, Rev. Chushin Passmore, and Rev. Saido Kenway all celebrated their tenth ordination birthdays in September. On July 28, Jenny Bryceson entered the community as a postulant. We warmly congratulate Rev. Myoho, Rev. Chushin, Rev. Saido, and Jenny and wish them every success in their future training.

On September 10, to complete her term as Chief Junior monk, Rev. Myfanwy Abbie successfully performed the *Chief Junior's Dharma Ceremony* [J. Hossen]. In this ceremony, each member of the community in turn questions the Chief Junior on a chosen theme. In order 'to make to let two arrows in mid-air, head-on,' the Chief Junior is to let go of all feelings of inadequacy and delusive thought and trust the deeper mind of meditation. Rev. Myfanwy chose a verse from the *Kyokukaimon* as the theme for the ceremony:

The Wheel of the Dharma rolls constantly and
lacks for nothing yet needs something. The
sweet dew covers the whole world and within
it lies the Truth....

Thank Rev. Myfanwy for her hard work and good example during her term as Chief Junior and wish her well.

Generals & Memorials: On July 31, the community celebrated the *Festival Memorial for Great Master Keizan*. We were reminded in the offertory for the ceremony that he had to train very hard to deal with a problem many of us find familiar with:

...From early childhood he sought to overcome
himself by valiantly subduing his terrible temper,
turning his back upon anger for ever by con-
verting it into compassion for those for whom
he had formerly felt hatred and contempt. By

doing this, he shows all of us the way to emulate Avalokiteswara Bodhisattva. He sought to explain the Truth to all by making a ceremony of everyday life so that every action, whether a seemingly ceremonial or worldly one, should have a heavenly meaning....

On August 31, we celebrated the *Festival Memorial for Great Master Dogen*, one of the other great founders of Soto Zen. At the start of the ceremony, Rev. Daishin Morgan expressed the following 'celebrant's wish': Great Master Dogen cut through all delusion to find the heart of the Truth. We pray that we may centre our lives upon that Truth and proceed as fearlessly as he did.

In August, Rev. Myoho Harris was the celebrant at the funeral of Philip Longton-Lockton in Bordon, Surrey. Memorials have also been celebrated for Violet Gilbertson, Stanislaw Kublicki Piottuch, and Gwenneth May Morgan.

Other Ceremonies: The *Sunday Lotus Ceremony* is still being held each month and continues to be well supported. We are particularly happy to see more people bringing their children along with them; the children have their own special activities and refreshments to enjoy while the adults attend the class after the ceremony.

On September 13, Rev. Mokugen Kublicki was the celebrant for the wedding of Tony and Virginia Lee of Whitchurch, Hampshire. Afterwards, the community and lay guests enjoyed a splendid lunch kindly donated by Tony and Virginia.

Building Progress: The walls of the new Meditation Hall are finished and, despite set-backs caused by bad weather, the roof is near completion; the electrical work is also progressing well. The shape of the new building can now be clearly seen, beautifully matching the Ceremony Hall, with its natural stone finish and strong outline.

Retreats & Talks: Our two Summer Retreat Courses, July 17-31, and August 17-30, were well attended, especially

the two final sesshin weeks. It will help us to plan the schedule for the Summer Retreat Courses if people would please fill in and return the enclosed questionnaire. (All comments and suggestions are welcome whether you intend to take part or not.)

Retreats have recently been held in Newcastle, Leeds, Chesterfield, and in Holland; a public talk in Nottingham; and meditation group meetings in Lancaster and Newcastle. We were pleased to have five members of the Manchester Meditation Group join us for a weekend of practice in July.

Lay Ministry News: On July 18, Hilaire MacCarthy received his Lay Minister's *rhakusu* from Rev. Daishin Morgan, thus being duly recognised as a Lay Minister of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives. We congratulate Hilaire for his sustained efforts in training and wish him well in his future practise.

Mailing List: Our mailing list has recently been transferred to the Priory computer which should make future bulk mailings much easier to organise. If, by chance, your name and address is not quite accurate, please let us know so we can correct our records.

Donations: We are most grateful for donations of altar bowls, furniture, books, tools, a vacuum cleaner, and an ironing board; seed sprouter, storage jars, spatulas, frying pan, crockery, and a kitchen blender; audio and video cassettes, a portable typewriter and two teapots; garden rakes; clothing; scissors, stamps, a laundry basket and detergent, and packaging materials; also we have just been given (sadly, too late to use on this issue) a LOCOSCRIPT 2 for our Amstrad PCW computers [LOCOSCRIPT 2 is an up-dated PCW package designed to extend operative hands-on experience and enhance user-friendly facilities of existing software...as we say in the trade!]

The kitchen thanks all those who kindly donated turkish delight, chocolate, honey, and jam; cheese and cheese-cake; fruit, walnuts, muesli, bulgur wheat; beans, rice,

and eggs; sugar, flour, herbs, and olive oil; tea & biscuits; bread & butter; and cat and dog treats.

Finally, we wish to thank Rev. Jisho Perry and Rev. Meian Elbert for donating to the Priory copies of the book, *Chinese Buddhist Monasteries*, by J. Prip Møller. This lavishly illustrated work is a classic on the subject, the result of a lifetime's devotion and research.

Begging Bowl: The Fire and Maintenance Departmentss request used newspapers (colour supplements excluded); the *Bookshop* can use plastic carrier bags, paper bags, tissue paper, small strong boxes, padded envelopes, and cardboard mailing tubes.

* * *

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